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LAFAYETTE VISTAS

LAFAYETTE PLAZA REDESIGN COMPLETED

Restoration Honors Lafayette's Most Important Public Place

Once the scene of dusty horse races, frenzied Pony Express stops and a thriving blacksmith trade, Lafayette Plaza was our community's original commercial area and social gathering place. The City's recently completed restoration has revived the area with attractive landscaping, cedar colonnades, restaurant seating, and Battery Park-style lights. The improvements make the Plaza – Lafayette's geographic and historic center – an attractive and inviting destination worthy of its historic past.

Then: 1915

The history of the Plaza goes back to California's earliest days as a State. In 1864, just 15 years after California's statehood, Lafayette's original settlers had the foresight and generosity to set aside property "for the benefit of the citizens of LaFayette." Elam and Margaret Allen Brown's gift of land, in the heart of town where the roads from Moraga and Oakland came together, created one of the State's earliest public parks.

A Role in American Lore

In the early 1860s, the Plaza played a minor – but exciting – role in American history. The Pony Express typically traveled from Sacramento to San Francisco by boat. However, when riders were late arriving in Sacramento, they were forced to continue by land in order to complete delivery from St. Joseph, MO within 10 days. During the service's 19 months of operation, Pony Express riders stopped at Lafayette Plaza 19 times to obtain fresh horses before riding on to Oakland and then ferrying the mail to San Francisco.

History Comes Alive

The buildings along the Plaza's southern edge bring Lafayette's early days to life. There are historical markers at the original Pioneer Store (built in the 1860s and now housing Handlebar Toys and A-1 Photo Lab) and the Way Side Inn, erected in 1894 as a hotel and restaurant. The California History Landmarks Advisory Committee has registered both buildings as California Points of Historical Interest. The Geils Building – built in 1880 as a saloon, and now the location of CyBelle's Pizza and A Man's Choice barber shop – is also an historic building.

In its earliest days, Lafayette Plaza was nothing more than a weed-covered field where merchants left their buggies, though residents quickly had a hand in improving its appearance. After purchasing the blacksmith shop in 1864, Peter Thomson plied his trade on the Plaza for nearly 50 years. While he enjoyed the impromptu foot races and wrestling matches that occurred there, Thompson also contributed to the Plaza's upkeep by planting and maintaining beds of petunias.

In 1911, Robert Elam McNeil, owner of the Pioneer Store, organized a meeting of Lafayette residents to "promote civic betterment." The Lafayette Improvement Association, which also built Town Hall in 1914, resulted from this initial call to action. One of the organization's first projects was fencing the Plaza to prevent the young men of Lafayette from holding horse races around its perimeter.

Now: 2001

The Lafayette Garden Club landscaped and maintained the Plaza for many years through the 1940s and 1950s. Beginning in the 1960s, the Lafayette Women's Club provided funds for the Plaza's maintenance.

Changing Times

In the twentieth century, ever-widening roads encroached into Lafayette Plaza from all four sides, reducing it to a fraction of its original size. As part of this year's renovation, the City has reclaimed much of the lost space, and the Plaza has been enlarged by 40% – from 9,300 to 13,000 square feet.

We hope you'll visit the new Lafayette Plaza to see the improvements we've made. You'll find more than 95 new trees, hundreds of star jasmine, manzanita, and yellow daylily plants, 32 cedar colonnades accented by special lighting – and maybe a little bit of the history that makes the Plaza Lafayette's first and most important public place.

PESTICIDES Create Hazardous Waste

Many Household, Pet Care, and Gardening Products are Contaminants

Did you know that commonly used pesticides can pollute local waters via sewer and storm drain systems and that even small amounts have proven lethal to life forms important to Bay Area urban creeks? In addition, these pesticides may also pose a long-term, cumulative threat to humans, animals, and the environment.

Even common products like insect sprays and flea powders can cause problems through typical use and/or improper disposal. San Francisco Bay and 35 Bay Area urban creeks, including nearby Walnut Creek, are classified by the EPA as "impaired" with diazinon, a component in hundreds of branded pesticides including Bug-B-Gon insect killers.

You can help reduce contamination by selecting pesticides with the least toxicity. The signal words **Caution**, **Warning**, **Danger** and **Poison** indicate the immediate effect on humans from the least to most toxic.

Careful disposal can also reduce contamination. Treat rinse water from cleaning pesticide containers and application equipment exactly as you would the pesticide itself and carefully follow directions on the product label. If a pesticide spill occurs, absorb or cover it with sawdust or kitty litter and sweep the waste into a plastic garbage bag for disposal at your local household hazardous waste facility (see sidebar).

Other practices that can help reduce pesticide contamination:

- Select the proper pesticide for your needs and only buy what you will use in one season.
- Never use banned pesticides: chlorpyrifos (commonly sold as Dursban) and diazinon (in hundreds of branded pesticides) are being phased out.
- Read all label and packaging information and carefully follow directions.
- Don't apply pesticides on rainy or windy days.
- Avoid over watering to prevent run off of pesticides into storm drains and creeks.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE SAFE USE AND DISPOSAL OF PESTICIDES:

- **www.centralsan.org/education/residential.html**
  The Central Contra Costa Sanitary District offers the "Less Toxic Home and Garden" guide and information about free "Gardening the Less Toxic Way" workshops.
- **www.birc.org**
  The Bio-Integral Resource Center (BIRC), provides Integrated Pest Management (IPM) information. Call **510-524-2567**.
- **www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/selectnewpest.home.html**
  The University of California supplies home and garden pest, plant disease, and weed control information.
- The Contra Costa Master Gardeners answers home gardening and pest control questions. Call **925-646-6586** Monday–Friday, 9:00 am to Noon.
- The National Pesticide Telecommunications Network answers queries about the safety, impact, and proper use of pesticides. Call **1-800-858-7378** daily from 6:30 am to 4:30 pm PST.

More Ways to Help

Campaigns and programs to protect our waterways are taking place in Lafayette and throughout Contra Costa County. Here are details about a few of them:

- **Purchase Less-Toxic Products**
  Lafayette's Ace Hardware, located at Mt. Diablo Blvd. and Carol Lane, is participating in the Central Contra Costa Sanitary District's "Our Water Our World" campaign. The store provides information about less-toxic supplies and highlights environmentally friendly products that feature the campaign logo shown on this page.
- **Dispose of Toxic Products Properly**
  Lafayette residents can take surplus pesticides to the Central Contra Costa Sanitary District's Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) facility at 4797 Imhoff Place in Martinez. Call **1-800-646-1431** for hours of service, directions, and the dates and locations of special mobile collections. You'll find more information at **www.centralsan.org/services/hhwcf.html.**
- **Support Green Businesses**
  Local businesses are working with the Contra Costa Green Business Program to keep pollutants out of our sewers, storm drains, creeks, and the San Francisco Bay. Support their voluntary conservation practices with your patronage. Look for the Green Business logo shown above or visit **www.greenbiz.abag.ca.gov** for a list of certified green businesses. For information about certification, call **925-646-2286** or email **rbwaite@hsd.co.contra-costa.ca.us.**

City Schools Explore Creek-Related Environmental Issues

Students at two Lafayette schools are learning first hand about the science of creeks.

Stanley School sixth and seventh graders benefited from a Creeks Committee grant that brought Lindsay Museum staff to the school as part of the Kids in Creeks program. The program covers the basic geology and chemistry of watersheds, as well as the vegetation and animals associated with the riparian ecosystem. Recently, the Lafayette Arts and Science Foundation approved a grant for 30 stereomicroscopes to allow for monthly monitoring of local creek microorganisms.

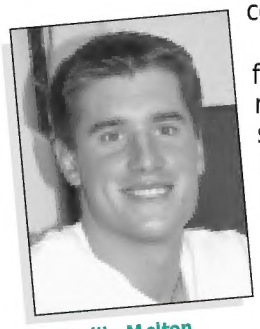
Acalanes High School has been awarded a State grant for a similar program featuring an outdoor Riparian Classroom curriculum set along the portion of Reliez Creek that borders school property.

Creeks A Popular Community Service Project

Increased public awareness of urban waterways and their value have focused students' attention on creek maintenance as a community service. Two projects were completed this spring:

Kevin Fickle

Acalanes High School freshman Kevin Fickle more than fulfilled his 10-hour community service requirement by laboring more than 60 hours to eliminate invasive bamboo from a 2,000 square foot area along the banks of Las Trampas Creek at the eastern end of Lafayette.



Collin Melton

Campolindo High School seniors Collin Melton, Trevor Ault, Erik Johnson, Jackie Leung, and Andrew Talbot satisfied a Government/Economics class requirement and prevented potential downstream blockages by spending a Saturday clearing deadwood and debris from Lafayette Creek along the Costas Trail across from the EBMUD Reservoir entrance.

Erik Johnson

Free Information Advice for Creek Side Property Owners

The Urban Creeks Council will provide advice to creek side property owners at no charge through a plan supported by the Contra Costa Clean Water Program. Guidance in complying with Federal, State and local agencies' regulatory procedures is available, as is information about environmentally sound stream management practices that property owners can accomplish themselves. The Council also coordinates stream and bank restoration efforts on a neighborhood basis. For more information call Josh Bradt at 510-540-6669.

Creeks Committee Seeks Applicants

Lafayette's Creeks Committee is seeking applicants for a vacant seat. The committee meets monthly to consider projects and programs that will benefit Lafayette's 16 miles of creeks. Pick up an application at the City Offices or call 284-1968.

Around Town

July 14 **LAFAYETTE PLAZA DEDICATION AND "THANK YOU" CELEBRATION –** Grab your blanket, sit on the new lawn, admire the General's profile, and enjoy the Jazz Dads, sidewalk chalk, and food booths at the new Lafayette Plaza. Dedication by the City Council at 2:15; party through 5pm. Call 284-7404 for information.

July 14 **SHANA MORRISON** – Van Morrison's daughter and her band Caledonia will play a blend of blues, Celtic, and jazz music at the Town Hall. 8pm, $18. Call 299-2710 for information.

July 19 **BOSWICK TURNSTYLE, JR.** – When is the last time you had a really good laugh? Well, have no fear, you will be laughing and OOOING and AAAAHING when Boswick Turnstyle Jr. comes to town! His crazy show is full of magical tricks, amazing juggling, and goofy things you have never seen before. Springhill School. 1pm, $2.50.

July 21 **SOUL SAUCE** – This high-octane quintet specializes in the music of legendary jazz vibraphonist Cal Tjader, and fuses Brazilian, Caribbean, and Latin rhythms with jazz melodies. The house will rock! Town Hall. 8pm, $18. Call 299-2710 for info.

July 26 **THE FLYING CALAMARI BROTHERS** – Come be dazzled by the wild and crazy antics of the Flying Calamari Brothers! Their magical ways will definitely leave you wanting more! This comedy duo will have you rolling in the aisles as they perform exciting magic and spectacular feats! Springhill School. 1pm, $2.50.

July 28 **CAJUN FIDDLER TOM RIGNEY** – Join Rigney and his band Flambeau as they tear the roof off with fiddlin', strummin', enthusiasm, precision, and fun! Town Hall. 8pm, $18. Call 299-2710 for info.

Aug. 2 **MAGICAL GERALD JOSEPH** – Gerald will astound you, baffle you, and make you laugh harder than you ever knew you could! Come see him make birds appear from out of nowhere, rabbits disappear to who-knows-where, and do crazy things with underwear! Springhill School. 1pm, $2.50.

Sept. 13 – Oct. 14 **TOWN HALL THEATER COMPANY** – Town Hall Theater Company kicks off their new season with "The Bible: The Complete Word of God (abridged)." 3-show packages start at only $35! Explore, experience and enjoy this incredible local arts resource! Call 283-1557.

Sept. 15, 16 **6TH ANNUAL ART & WINE FESTIVAL** – Arts and crafts booths, wine and micro-brewed beer, restaurants and vendors, live music, a kidzone for children of all ages. Downtown Lafayette. Call the Chamber at 284-7404 for more information.

Oct. 28 **LAFAYETTE RESERVOIR RUN** – Mark your calendars now so that you don't miss out on Northern California's most scenic fun run. Call the Chamber at 284-7404 for more information.

New Staff, Expanded Roles, Strengthens Community Development Efforts

Lafayette has undertaken a number of ambitious planning challenges over the past few years, with its Community Development Department serving an increasingly complex role. In order to continue to provide the community with the highest quality services, the City has redefined staff functions and responsibilities and created some new positions.

Ann Merideth is Lafayette's new Community Development Director. She worked for the City of Vallejo for the past twenty years, most recently as Development Services Director. Earlier in her career, Ann spent 7 years as a planner and graphic artist for the City of San Leandro.

A Lafayette resident, Ann will oversee all issues related to the "built environment" in Lafayette. At the same time, she'll provide direction to the City's Planning, Engineering, Public Works, and Redevelopment activities. Ann earned both a BA in Art and an MA in Architecture and Urban Planning at UCLA.

David Golick is Lafayette's new Planning and Building Manager. He has served as the City's interim Community Development Director since December. Before joining the City staff, Dave served for 10 years as Concord's Chief of Planning.

Dave brings more than 30 years of professional planning experience to this newly created position in which he'll provide broad strategic direction and supervision for the further planned development of Lafayette. Dave has a BA in Economics from the University of Massachusetts.

Farzaneh Sanders is Lafayette's new Senior Engineer. Farzaneh has worked in Lafayette's engineering department for five years, and most recently been responsible for managing Lafayette's "downtown project" – the largest capital improvement project in the City's history. In her new role, Farzaneh will supervise half of the professional engineering staff, and will be specifically responsible for introducing newer engineering staff members to "the Lafayette way" – lots of community involvement in the design process, realistic budgeting and on-time, high quality project delivery. Farzaneh has a BS in Civil Engineering from San Jose State, and twenty years of in-the-field experience.

CITY DIRECTORY

Council Members message: **284-1968**

Council Members

Ivor Samson	**Mayor**
Don Tatzin	**Vice Mayor**
Carol Federighi	**Council Member**
Erling Horn	**Council Member**
Jay Strauss	**Council Member**

For messages to **all** Council Members: **Ext. 907**

Administration

General Reception and	**284-1968**
Steven Falk, City Manager	**Fax: 284-3169**
Tracy Robinson, Admin. Srv. Dir.	**299-3227**
Gonzalo Silva, Financial Srv. Mgr.	**299-3213**
Joanne Robbins, City Clerk	**299-3210**

Community Development

- **Director,** Ann Merideth — **299-3218**
- **Engineering Services** — **284-1951**
  Tony Coe, Manager — **299-3203**
- **Planning Services** — **284-1976**
  David Golick, Manager
- **Public Works Services**
  Ron Lefler, Manager — **299-3214**
  P.W. Hotline (to report problems) — **299-3259**

If you observe illegal dumping in creeks & storm drains or accidental spills on roads, call Contra Costa Hazardous Materials Division 646-2286.

Lamorinda School Bus Program

Juliet Shanks, Analyst — **299-3216** **Or 299-3215**

Parks and Recreation — **284-2232**

Jennifer Russell, Director	
Yvonne Ozorio, Senior Services	**284-5050**
Teen Programs	**284-5815**

Police Services

Emergency: 24 Hours	**911**
Police Dispatch: 24 Hours	**284-5010**
Police Business Office:	**283-3680**

Anonymous Tipline, Traffic Enforcement, Suggestions & LEARN (Laf. Emergency Action Response Network), 299-3232 X 2205

Addresses — **Fax: 284-3169**

Street Address:	**3675 Mt. Diablo Blvd. #210**
Mailing Address:	**P.O. Box 1968 Lafayette, CA 94549-1968**
Website:	**www.ci.lafayette.ca.us**

E-MAIL: Council/staff members can be reached via e-mail using the following address format:

First Initial + Last Name @lovelafayette.org

Example: SFalk@lovelafayette.org

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